

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 079214

EXDIS

E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: ETRD, JA

SUBJECT: US LOG EXPORTS TO JAPAN

REF : TOKYO 4913

1. EMBASSY MAY INFORM APPROPRIATE GOJ OFFICIALS THAT JUDGMENT OF THOSE CLOSEST TO CONGRESSIONAL SCENE IS THAT IT IS PROBABLE THAT AN EMBARGO OR SEVERE RESTRICTION ON LOG EXPORTS CAN BE PASSED BY CONGRESS. EMOTIONALISM OF ISSUE AND SIMPLISTIC ARGUMENTS AVAILABLE TO PROPONENTS OF RESTRICTIONS ARE PRINCIPAL FACTORS IN THEIR JUDGMENT.

2. PERHAPS BEST SOURCES SUCH JUDGMENT ARE THOSE OPPOSED TO LOG EXPORT RESTRICTIONS:

A. A KEY SENATE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID PROPONENTS OF EXTREME MEASURE HAVE ENOUGH VOTES TO PASS SUCH MEASURE IN HIS COMMITTEE. COMMITTEE STAFF STATE CHAIRMAN FEELS JAPANESE AGREEMENT TO RESTRAIN LOG IMPORTS WOULD BE A POWERFUL TOOL TO HEAD OFF EXTREME LEGISLATION.

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B. SEVERAL CONGRESSMEN MOVED A MODERATE AMENDMENT IN HOUSE BANKING AND CURRENCY COMMITTEE BECAUSE OF IMMINENT PASSAGE OF LOG EXPORT EMBARGO SUPPORTED BY HOME BUILDERS. TWO OF THESE CONGRESSMEN HAVE LONG BEEN SUPPORTERS OF US EXPORT PROGRAMS AND ONE LED FLOOR FIGHT TWO YEARS AGO AGAINST EXTENSION MORSE AMENDMENT LOG EXPORT RESTRICTIONS.

C. ANOTHER SENATOR WHO MOST VOCAL CRITIC OF EXTREME MEASURE CONSIDERS POLITICAL PRESSURES SO EXTREME THAT HE IS PREPARING HIS OWN " COMPROMISE" INVOLVING A TOTAL BAN OF EXPORTS FROM FEDERAL LANDS AND A RESTRICTIVE PROVISION TO PREVENT SUBSTITUTION LOGS FROM PRIVATELY- OWNED LAND.

D. CONTRARY TO NORMAL LEGISLATIVE SITUATION, TWO OTHER SENATORS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BELIEVED THAT PASSAGE MODERATE AMENDMENT WOULD HAVE ONLY WEAKENED BUT NOT DERAILED EXTREME MEASURE.

E. A CONGRESSWOMAN WHO WAS FORMERLY KEY SUPPORTER OF LOG EXPORTS HAS PROPOSED TOTAL BAN ON EXPORTS FROM FEDERAL LANDS.

F. ANOTHER CONGRESSMAN BELIEVES POLITICAL PRESSURES WILL FORCE TOTAL BAN ON LOG EXPORTS FROM FEDERAL LANDS AND OVERALL EXPORT CEILING WELL BELOW 2 BILLION BOARD FEET.

G. NUMEROUS SOURCES IN CONGRESS BELIEVE HOME BUILDERS ACTIVITIES IN CONGRESS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE LOBBYING EFFORT SEEN IN NUMBER OF YEARS. EVEN AMONG STRONGEST OPPONENTS OF EXTREME MEASURES, THERE IS CONSENSUS THAT AT BEST POLITICAL PRESSURES WILL REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL EXPORT RESTRICTION. FURTHER EVIDENCE IS FACT ANOTHER SENATOR WHO IS REGARDED BY HIS FELLOW SENATORS AS ONE OF MOST RESPECTED LIBERAL TRADE PROPONENTS IN SENATE, HAS JOINED AS CO- SPONSOR OF EXTREME MEASURE.

3. RE LIMITATIONS ON USE OF PRESIDENTIAL VETO, MUCH WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER EXTREME- TYPE MEASURE WERE PART OF LARGER LEGISLATION WHICH ADMINISTRATION MIGHT URGENTLY DESIRE.
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STRONG PRESSURES PRESENTLY DIRECTED AT CONGRESS COULD BE EXPECTED TO BE DIRECTED AT WHITE HOUSE IF BILL PASSES CONGRESS. WE ARE UNABLE PROVIDE FURTHER GUIDANCE ON THIS QUESTION GIVEN LARGE NUMBER OF VARIABLES. ROGERS

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